



for the greatest good



# malheur national forest

## 2014 Accomplishment Report

*Logan Valley, Malheur National Forest, USFS Photo*

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# **Recreation, Engineering, Lands and Minerals (RELM)**

## **Special Uses**

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### **Accomplishment Summary**

The Special Uses program was managed by accomplishing the program of work described below.

### **Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:**

- Met 15 NFLM04 administered to standard targets
- Developed a Forest-wide GIS layer for Non-Recreation Special Uses
- Issued Special Use Permit, Amendment and/or Approval for the following requests:
  - Oregon Telephone Corporation - Fiber Optic Replacement Line (~thirteen miles across two Forests)
  - Austin Water Cooperative spring development permit renewal
  - Fresh Water Trust water gauge instrumentation permit
  - US Geological Services aspen research permit
  - Historical Research Associates archeological permit
  - Oregon Department of Transportation Communication Lease Transfer at Aldrich Mountain Communication Site
  - Grant County special use permits (four) conversion to single road easement (County Road 63)
  - Johnson road easement
  - Oliver irrigation ditch maintenance request
  - Eisiminger drain field special use permit renewal
  - Processed various 2700-10 communication equipment requests from Communication Lease holders (private/state/county) for Fall Mountain, Devine Ridge, King Mountain and Aldrich Communication Sites
  - Two emergency Cell-on-Wheels set-ups at Forest Communication Sites for wildfire suppression/support
  - Idaho Power Structure Pole Replacements
  - Idaho Power Hazard Tree Mitigations
  - Columbia Power Hazard Tree Mitigations
  - Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative Power Pole Replacements on three districts at five various line stretches
  - Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative Hazard Tree Mitigations
    - Emigrant Creek District within 10-Year Stewardship project
    - Blue Mountain Ranger District short timber sale initiation and within Pluto Timber Sale
  - State Radio Project's request to mitigate vegetation interference on Fall Mountain
  - State Radio Project's request to mitigate vegetation interference on Devine Ridge Communication Site
- Additional Program Management Accomplishments assisted customers with:
  - State Radio Project request to develop Dry Mountain as a potential Communication Site

- Continued management of Oregon Department of Transportation's replacement communication tower at the Aldrich Communication Site
- Oregon Department of Transportation's Deicer Installation request
- Oregon Department of Transportation's request to extend approval for the installation of a canopy structure.
- Oregon Water Resources Department request to modify gauging station
- Grant County's request for Communication Tower Replacement on Dixie Communication Site
- Blue Mountain Broadcasting radio frequency safety mitigation at Fall Mountain Communication Site
- Chapman drain field special use permit request
- Conducted reviews on more than 11 Forest projects for potential affects to non-recreation special use permit holders
- Assisted special use permit holders contact Forest Plan Revision and Forest Accelerated Restoration Planners to provide comment
- Provided irrigation ditch information on Roberts Creek Diversion and Logan Valley ditches to District and Forest resource specialists
- Brooks ditch maintenance request
- Martin spring development special use and Fuels burn pile conflict
- O'Rorke spring development initiation
- Austin Water Cooperative fencing proposal
- Verizon transfer of communication site equipment request
- Oregon Water Resources Department gauging station modification proposal
- Provided Forest permitted spring development location information to Fire Staff to be included in fire retardant avoidance areas
- Oregon Public Broadcasting slash treatment at Devine Ridge Communication Site
- Westervelt special uses permit compliance

## **Key Projects in Progress**

- Completion of Oregon Department of Transportation Aldrich Communication Site Tower Replacement equipment migration
- Oregon Telephone Corporation Fiber Optic Line Replacement completion
- Grant County Communication Replacement Tower approval and completion
- Updating of Forest Communication Site Plans
- Reduction of backlog of expired special use permits
- Forest direction on irrigation ditch management

## **Contacts**

Mike Montgomery	541-575-3166
Stacia Kimbell	541-575-3349

# **Recreation, Engineering, Lands and Minerals (RELM) Minerals**

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## **Accomplishment Summary**

The Minerals program was managed by accomplishing the program of work described below.

## **Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:**

- Performed 31 forest-wide locatable site inspections
- Processed five Notices of Intent to Mine
- Continued work on one expired Plan of Operations, and one new proposed Plan of Operation
- Fielded over 20 forest mining inquires/walk-ins
- Processed 15 mineral material permits
- Performed inspections on all continuous mineral material permit contracts
- Monitored one Geological Hazard and one Geological Resource
- Obtained clearance for the demolition of one unauthorized use cabin
- Mitigated three abandoned mine safety hazards with the installation of two bat gates and one emergency earthen filled shaft
- Updated and maintained the Forest Locatable GIS Layer
- Issued requested mining related travel access permits
- Conducted reviews on more than 11 Forest projects for potential affects to miners
- Assisted miners contact Forest Plan Revision and Forest Accelerated Restoration Planners to provide comment
- Worked with a patented claim inholder to remove a private gate in trespass on National Forest System Lands

## **Key Projects in Progress**

- Boulder Group initial review for Abandon Mine Lands funding
- Analysis of two Notices of Intent to Mine and one Plan of Operation

## **Contacts**

Mike Montgomery	541-575-3166
Steve Beverlin	541-575-3073

# Wilderness, Trails, and Recreation

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## Accomplishment Summary

The Wilderness, Trails, and Recreation program was managed by accomplishing the program of work described below.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Delintment Lake Campground Fee Board signage improvement
- Falls Creek Campground fence rebuilt after damaged by wildfire
- Murderer's Creek Recreational cabin and grounds upkeep through various improvements such as installation of pole fence enclosing the area and replacing old fence
- Big Creek Campground entrance sign replaced
- Removed peeling paint and re-painted the dressing room building at Magone Lake Campground
- Installed new concrete parking barriers at Magone Lake Campground
- Placed new dressing rooms locator sign at Magone Lake Campground
- Removed delapidated buck and pole fence at Magone Lake Campground
- Identified and fell approximately 4 dozen hazard trees at developed fee campgrounds
- Eradicated weeds at Sunshine Recreation Rental
- Placed new safety sign at Fall Mountain Lookout Recreation Rental
- Refurbished one water hand pump at Delintment Lake campground
- Performed routine campground maintenance at all 22 developed fee campground sites; cleaned fire rings, tables and bathrooms, raked around fire rings, maintained the signboards and fee stations, and picked up trash
- Collected fees and monitored for and enforced fee compliance at all 22 developed fee campgrounds
- 105 miles of logout within Strawberry Mountain Wilderness. Repaired washouts and stream crossing on 2.7 miles of trail
- Tread clearing and brushing on 25 miles of trail within Strawberry Mountain Wilderness
- Removed rocks from a slide and repaired the tread on Slide Connector Trail
- Re-routed Tamarack Creek (that was flowing down East Fork Canyon Trail) back into its original channel to avoid further erosion of the trail and to protect the stream
- At Mahogany Point placed a sign directing horses to use a safer trail going to Slide Lake
- North Fork John Day Watershed Council OYCC crew did campsite monitoring for the 10-Year-Wilderness-Challenge. They also performed noxious weed inventory in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness



Big Creek Campground Entrance Sign



Falls Creek Campground Newly Constructed Fence

## Contacts

Shannon Winegar    541-820-3863  
Mike Montgomery    541-575-3166

# Engineering (Aquatics)

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## Accomplishment Summary

- Construction of Ragged Creek and 2612365 Culvert Replacements
  - Awarded in FY13 with CMLG funding
  - Opened up more than three miles of spawning and rearing habitat
- Award of one additional Culvert Replacement for implementation in FY15
  - Windlass Creek Culvert Replacement

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Continued support to the Regional Design Assistance Team

## Key Projects in Progress

- Implementation of the one awarded projects will occur in 2015
- Additional sites are being surveyed and designed

## Partnerships Involved

- Application with CTWSRO for WWRI funding on the Windlass Creek Culvert



2612365 Culvert, Before and After

## Funding

Miles	Funding	Activity
3.6	CMLG	Stream Habitat Enhancement

## Contacts

Holly Bentz	541-575-3012
Steve Beverlin	541-575-3073



# Aquatics (Watershed & Fisheries)

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## Accomplishment Summary

The Aquatics program was managed by working closely with the region and accomplishing the program of work described below.

### Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Completed Aquatic Restoration EA that covers applicable watershed restoration categories as described in the ARBO II for the entire Forest.
- Aquatic Organism Passage monitoring in CFLRP area in partnership with PNW Research Station.
- Camp Creek Tributaries Large Woody Debris addition – Accomplished 2.0 miles of in-stream restoration involving tipping and placing approximately 480 trees in the Camp and Cougar Creeks. Also, removed 22 legacy log weirs within 1.0 mile of Camp Creek Reach Seven, with approximately 120 entire trees being tipped and placed at weir removal locations.
- As of FY2014 about 95% of the fish passage and stream restoration projects have been completed (Priority Projects 1-7 from the 2008 WAP); no road treatment projects (Priority Projects 8-14 from WAP) have been completed – exception being priority 11, monitoring. Approximately 70% of the work in the WAP has been completed as of FY2014.

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<b>Watershed Restoration:</b>	Core Target =	50 acres
	Core & Integrated Target =	9000 acres
<b>Blue Mountain Ranger District</b>		24 acres
▪ Camp Creek (LWD additions)		
▪ Camp Creek R7 Log Weir Removal		
▪ 2 Culverts Replaced		
<b>Emigrant Creek Ranger District</b>		38 acres
▪ SFJD (Bear Creek) Juniper Thinning		
▪ Shurtz Creek Planting, Thinning, Large Woody Debris		
<b>Prairie City Ranger District</b>		21 acres
▪ Lake Creek and Malheur River Fences		
<b>CORE TOTAL ACCOMPLISHED:</b>		<b>83 acres</b>
<b>INTEGRATED TOTAL ACCOMPLISHED</b>		<b>9242 acres</b>



Malheur Lakes Carp Reduction Project. Working with partners to reduce carp populations at very large spring source



**Fisheries Restoration:**

Core Target =	6 miles
Core & integrated Target =	35 miles
Lake Target =	500 acres

<b>Blue Mountain Ranger District</b>	20.3 miles
▪ Core Target Accomplishment	8.8 miles
▪ Integrated Accomplishment	11.5 miles

<b>Emigrant Creek Ranger District:</b>	28.5 miles
▪ Core Target Accomplishment	28.5 miles
▪ Integrated Accomplishment	0.0 miles
▪ Lake Accomplishment	500 acres

<b>Prairie City Ranger District:</b>	4.9 miles
▪ Core Target Accomplishment	0.3 miles
▪ Integrated Accomplishment	4.6 miles

<b>CORE TOTAL ACCOMPLISHED:</b>	<b>37.6 miles</b>
<b>CORE &amp; INTEG. TOTAL ACCOMPLISHED:</b>	<b>53.7 miles</b>
<b>LAKE TARGET:</b>	<b>500 acres</b>

## Funding

**\$ 662,397 Total**

\$ 335,750 (NFVW)

\$ 258,647 (NFWF)

\$ 68,000 (Partners)

## Contacts

Steve Namitz                      541-575-3167

Tom Friedrichsen      541-575-3010

Upper Camp Creek Large Woody Debris Additions (Before and After Photos).



# Silviculture

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## Accomplishment Summary

Silviculture personnel on the Malheur National Forest accomplished a great deal of work which involved wildfire reforestation (tree planting), precommercial thinning (PCT) in plantations and naturally regenerated stands, forest stand data collection for planning and analysis, data collection for the CFLR monitoring program, 10-Year Stewardship Contract implementation monitoring, participating in collaborative group discussions, and assisted in planning and implementation of the Malheur's aggressive forest restoration program.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- 4,251 acres of tree planting in Parish Cabin and Egley wildfire areas
- 7,416 acres of precommercial thinning:
  - 1,039 acres of plantations
  - 6,377 acres of naturally stocked stands
- 3,600 acres of reforestation surveys
- 8,000 acres (1,674 plots) stand exam contract
- 15,837 acres of commercial thinning



## Key Projects in Progress

- Preparation for wildfire reforestation (planting) of 3,800 acres in 2015.
- Administered continuing PCT, and data collection contracts.
- Vegetation data collection in the Ragged/Ruby, Summit, Upper Bear/Lake Creek , Upper Camp Creek, Flat, and Dove watersheds for use in future project analysis.
- Continued analysis on the Wolf, Big Mosquito, Elk 16, and Summit projects.
- Pre-analysis work for the Cliff/Knox, Dove, and Magone projects.
- Assisted with implementation of the 10-Year Stewardship Contract



## Funding

Acres	Funding	Activity
4,251	RTRT	Tree Planting
1,039	RTRT	PCT Plantations
6,337	SSCC/RTRT/WFHF/CFLN	PCT
3,600	RTRT	Surveys
8,000	NFVW	Stand Exams
15,837	CFLN/NFTM/NFVW/SSCC/WFHF	Commercial Thinning

## Contacts

Larry Amell 541-575-3430

# Botany

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## Accomplishment Summary

In 2014, the botany program provided direct support to vegetation and range management, recreation, wildlife, aquatics, engineering, special uses, and hazardous fuels projects. Botanical support covered a wide range of needs which included: sensitive species surveys, habitat assessments, species identification, wetland delineation and inventory, stand exams, and vegetation monitoring protocols.

A major focus of the botany program was to provide direction, assistance, and funding in support of the Malheur's Accelerated Restoration Program and Range NEPA efforts.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Prepared 30 biological evaluations for one Environmental Impact Statement, eight Environmental Assessments, and 21 Categorical Exclusions
- Provided botanical clearance and NEPA input for over 200,000 acres
- Surveyed over 8,000 acres for rare plants
- Discovered 40 new sensitive plant sites (ten species)
- Revisited 21 known sites to better document populations



Grapeferns were the most commonly found sensitive plants on the Malheur NF in 2014.

## Key Projects in Progress

- Continued implementation of monitoring program for *Astragalus tegetarioides*, a globally rare sensitive species that may benefit from vegetation treatments and restoration activities
- Continued data collection for the historical Phenology Monitoring Station near Seneca, Oregon. This data will be compared to data from the 1930's and will be shared via national phenology databases and climate change networks
- Created a field guide for documented and suspected sensitive plant species on the Forest (177 pages)
- Assisted with development and implementation of the CFLRP monitoring program (Southern Blues Restoration Coalition)
- Entered into a challenge cost share agreement with the Carex Working Group to develop a conservation strategy for the globally rare species, Idaho sedge (*Carex idahoensis*)
- Prepared and submitted a manuscript to publish a checklist of over 556 bryophyte and lichen species that have been documented on the Forest to date (submitted to *Evansia*)

## Partnership Involvement

The Forests Botany program works closely with Northwest Lichenologists, Carex Working Group, Stone Ecosurveys, Oregon Biodiversity Information Center, Oregon State University.

## Contacts

Joe Rausch	541-575-3141
Paula Brooks	541-575-3303

# Native Plant Restoration Program

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## Accomplishment Summary

Native plant materials were used for restoration, revegetation, and habitat improvement.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Riparian Habitat: over 6,000 hardwood cuttings, 50 lbs. of riparian native grass seed mix, and 2 lbs. of native forb seed were used for stream restoration projects and culvert replacements projects that improved critical fish habitat
- Logging and Fuels Reduction: over 1,900 lbs. of upland native seed mix was applied to disturbed ground as a result of skid trails, landings, and large burned-out slash piles
- Forage Improvements: over 300 lbs. of upland seed mix was used for rangeland habitat improvements associated with livestock allotments and big game winter range
- Mining and Special Use Reclamation: over 200 lbs. of upland seed mix was provided to re-vegetate disturbed areas for mining claims, utility corridors, and special use projects.
- Seed Production and Purchase – 815 lbs. of Great Basin Wild Rye was procured and delivered from previous contracts

## Key Projects in Progress

- Continued to collect and map source populations for showy native forb species. Seed is collected in small quantities (<3 lbs.) to use in small, highly visible, disturbed sites (e.g. campgrounds, culvert replacements on primary roads, etc.) to improve ground cover and promote wildflower viewing areas. Small quantities of seed were collected from seven species of native showy forbs.

## Partnership Involvement

The Native Plant Restoration Program worked closely with Benson Farms, Western Reclamation, Eastern Oregon Stewardship, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, Oregon Department of Transportation, Carter Ranch, Southworth Ranch, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, The Nature Conservancy, Deschutes Basin Native Seed Bank.

## Contacts

Joe Rausch

541-575-3141



*Seeded Slash Pile* – Remains of burned-out slash pile show establishment of native grasses in area that was previously bare ground following burning

*Unseeded Slash Pile* – Remains of burned-out slash pile show establishment of invasive thistles in area that was not seeded with native plants





# Invasive Plant Program

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## Accomplishment Summary

In 2014, the Malheur National Forest continued to inventory and treat invasive plant infestations.

Acres	Activity
363.8	Mechanical/manual treatments of invasive plants
358.2	Monitoring of invasive plant treatments

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Continued manual and mechanical treatment of invasive plants (e.g. mowing, pulling, grubbing). Treated 363.8 acres forest-wide (104% of target). Forest is still enjoined following court order from using biological or chemical treatments
- Released DEIS and worked towards final Malheur National Forest Site-Specific Invasive Plants Treatment Project EIS to authorize a full suite of treatment and prevention tools
- Hired a forest-wide Invasive Plants Specialist to improve planning and implementation of the program
- Increased our re-vegetation efforts dramatically by seeding with native plant seeds to disturbed areas
- Employed ten local kids (two youth crews) in partnership with the North Fork John Day Watershed Council to manually control and monitor invasive plant infestations in the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CFLRP) Area
- Initiated and developed new partnerships with adjacent landowners, range allotment permittees, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders to advance a more collaborative and efficient effort to eradicate, control, and monitor invasive plants across the landscape

## Partnership Involvement

The Invasive Plant Program worked closely with North Fork John Day Watershed Council, Upper South Fork John Day River Watershed Council, Blue Mountain Collaborative Group, Harney County Collaborative Group, Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project, Grant County Soil and Water Conservation District, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Harney County, Grant County, The Nature Conservancy, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Transportation, private landowners, ranchers.

## Contacts

Whitney Rapp	541-575-3067
Joe Rausch	541-575-3141



Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) invaded the disturbed ground near a slash pile

# Wildlife/Threatened and Endangered Species

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## Accomplishment Summary

In 2014 the Malheur National Forest Wildlife/Threatened and Endangered Species (TES) program in conjunction with partners completed 31,776 acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat improvement projects, which exceeded the 30,000 acre target by 1,776 acres.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- In partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, acquired 23 private parcels totaling 13,078 acres known as the John Day Headwaters Land Acquisition. The headwaters project permanently protected upland and riparian habitat for the benefit of fish and wildlife
- Completed 10 biological evaluations
- Installed 13 screens on vault toilet vent stacks to prevent entry and entrapment of birds
- Closed roads to provide an additional 8,197 acres of wildlife security
- Protected and enhanced 68 acres of aspen stands through fencing and conifer removal
- Repaired and maintained 3 water developments for wildlife (guzzlers)
- Installed 2 bat friendly mine/cave closures
- Conducted 2 nature watch presentations.
- Supported a nationally recognized restoration effort that is doubling the scale of restoration on the Malheur National Forest

## Funding

Fund Code	Acres	Activity
NFWF	3,921	Road closures, aspen enhancement and protection, and screen installation on toilet vents
Non-NFWF	25,849	Fuels and vegetation management, riparian restoration, mine closures, as well as above mentioned items
Partnership	2,006	Road closures, aspen enhancement, and protection, and guzzler repair
Partnership	13,084	John Day Headwaters land acquisition

## Partnership Involvement

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Oregon Hunters Association, Oregon Youth Conservation Consortium.

## Contact

Clark Reames      541-575-3474  
Steve Beverlin      541-575-3073



# Range

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## Accomplishment Summary

The Malheur National Forest Rangeland Management Program worked with local permittees to administer grazing on 111 allotments. Our team of a dozen permanent and seasonal range staff across three ranger districts helped administer range improvements, movement among pastures, grazing resource conditions, and integrated monitoring with assistance from hydrologists, botanists, and fisheries biologists. We worked with the Regional Office and Prineville BLM to prepare for Wild Horse Territory management planning, and continued to support a separate range NEPA team to move forward with individual allotment management planning.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Completed detailed upland site monitoring on 275,000 acres (all districts)
- Monitored aquatic resources as required by National Marine Fisheries Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (primarily Prairie City and Blue Mountain Districts)
- Prepared a Year End Grazing report as required by National Marine Fisheries Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service (all districts)
- Gathered and disseminated monitoring results in support of future environmental analysis decisions needed for National Environmental Policy Act compliance (all districts)
- Provided support to accomplish reporting related to requests under Freedom of Information Act (all districts)
- Made adjustments in timing and duration of grazing schedules needed as a result of drought and other environmental conditions (all districts)
- Worked with local grazing permittees in preparation of annual grazing authorizations (all districts)
- Worked with Oregon Cattleman's Association, local ranchers, Grant County government, OSU, NRCS, and others in implementation of a cooperative monitoring program
- Administered the Murderer's Creek Wild Horse Territory (MCWHT) (Blue Mountain District)
- Assisted with the completion of the Malheur NF Aquatic Restoration Environmental Assessment (signed Decision) – which enables a streamlined implementation of various range improvement projects (Forest-wide)



## **Key Projects in Progress**

- Began implementation of Summit Logan Grazing Authorization Project (Environmental Impact Statement)
- Monitoring for consultation requirements, Grazing allotments administered to standard (ongoing work)
- Site analysis and preparation of NEPA documents related to grazing on 7 allotments across forest (targeted for 2015 decisions) and 2 allotments (targeted for 2016 decisions)
- Preparing several grant requests for habitat improvement that partner with Oregon Natural Desert Assoc., Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation, Burns Paiute Tribe, US Fish and Wildlife Service. If awarded most of monies would be used to help in livestock distribution (fencing) and plantings of native grasses and trees

## **Contacts**

Ernie Gipson	541-575-3307
Steve Beverlin	541-575-3073

# Heritage

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## Accomplishment Summary

Maintained a large seasonal workforce (5 permanent and 22 seasonal) to provide support for the Accelerated Restoration Program and the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) while meeting the National Target of Managing the Heritage Program to Standard.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Accelerated Restoration Program
  - Section 106 field survey for the Dove, Cliff/South Knox and Magone vegetation management projects and the Izee grazing authorization project
- Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CFLRP)
  - Two CFLRP monitoring crews inspected layout and monitored implementation of CFLRP funded thinning and hazardous fuels reduction projects
- Conducted Heritage Technician training (40 hours) for new and returning field employees
- Managed the Heritage Program to National Standard
  - One winter lithic analysis PIT project
    - Eight volunteers and three archaeology technicians from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
  - One summer test excavation project at a Chinese mining site
    - Eight volunteers
  - 760 volunteer hours contributed
  - 200 Priority Heritage Assets managed to standard
  - Four Priority Heritage Asset permanent monitoring sites established
  - 240 acres of non-project high probability area survey
  - Five public outreach programs

## Key Projects in Progress

Inventory and NEPA report preparation for the Big Mosquito, Summit Creek, Cliff/South Knox, Magone, Wolf and Dove vegetation management projects and the Central Malheur and Izee range projects.

## Contacts

Don Hann	541-575-3081
Steve Beverlin	541-575-3073



Wickiup Campground 1916

# **Fire & Aviation Management (Fuels Program)**

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## **Accomplishment Summary**

The Accelerated Restoration program continued in earnest on the Malheur in 2014. The forest fuels program again exceeded all implementation targets with over 41,000 reported acres treated. This accomplishment is a direct result of the hard work and collaboration of forest staff and our external partners.

The number one priority for fuels treatments on the Forest continues to be reduction of hazardous fuels identified in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) for both Harney and Grant Counties. These treatments help create fire adapted communities by mitigating against fires coming from the forest onto adjacent lands as well as to protect the forest from fires coming in from those same lands. Projects in and out of the WUI also include aspen restoration, road decommissioning, tree thinning and stream and wildlife habitat improvement. In line with all aspects of the National Cohesive Strategy for Wildland Fire, reduction of fuel loads also helps restore and maintain resilient landscapes and improve our response to wildfire.

7,041 acres of broadcast burning were accomplished in FY14



## **Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:**

### **Mitigation and Education Efforts on the Upswing**

2014 was a watershed year for wildland fire mitigation on the Malheur, with the official designation of the first FireWise community in all of Eastern Oregon: The Pine Creek community on the outskirts of John Day. This is unique not only because it is the first for this large geographic area, but also because it is the first time a community that was not a town or official subdivision was officially recognized.

To become an official FireWise community, members must complete a number of steps including coming together to do hazardous fuels reduction projects. The people of Pine Creek have been raising awareness with neighbors, working with local Rural Fire Departments and other partners, and completed several community projects.

For her tremendous efforts leading up to this, the Malheur National Forest, the Grant County Commissioners, and the Oregon Department of Forestry nominated Irene Jerome for a National Wildland Fire Mitigation award. Ms. Jerome was selected for this honor and will be formally recognized at a national Wildland Urban Interface gathering in March 2015.

Harney County Restoration Collaborative field trip.



### **External Partnerships**

The strong commitment to integrated fuels and vegetation management reflects on the partnerships the forest has established with industry and environmental interests through the Blue Mountain Forest Partners, Harney County Restoration Collaborative, Grant and Harney County Commissioners and other neighbors. By working with these collaborative partners through all phases of planning and implementation, the Malheur continues its outstanding planning track record by adding several NEPA analyses, such as the forest-wide Aquatic Restoration EA, to our shelves with no proposals litigated in more than six years.

In 2014, 7,337 acres of treatment were completed using Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CLFR) funds. These are an additional appropriation awarded to only a few forests nationwide. The funds also assisted with monitoring and contracting work in the CLFR area.

### **Resource Advisor Program Reinvigorated**

The Resource Advisor Program (READ) is a critical piece in fire management activities. Through this program Fire Managers ensure critical natural and cultural resources are considered and protected to the fullest extent possible during all emergency fire suppression actions. In 2014, the program began with no qualified READs due in large part to retirements within the natural resource staff areas. The Fire Management organization worked with the many new specialists hired in 2013-2014 to rebuild and strengthen the READ program throughout the winter and spring. As a result, two READs became qualified in 2014 and nine trainees received valuable assignments during the busy fire season. By reinvigorating this program, the Malheur not only is able to make sounder decisions during fire emergencies, but we are building better internal relationships that create efficiencies across disciplines.

### **Key Projects in Progress**

Accelerated restoration work will continue through FY15 and beyond. Several landscape scale decisions are planned for signature in 2015 and will contribute to continued work across the forest. The projects are designed to reduce future fire severity and intensity and help foster more resilient landscapes. The fuels program continues to support these integrated projects with hazardous fuels dollars.

### **Contacts**

Roy Walker 541-575-3103  
Dana Skelly 541-575-3105



## Fire & Aviation Management (Preparedness)

### Accomplishment Summary

Fiscal Year 2014 was a busy year on all levels for the Malheur Fire and Aviation Management program. Fire suppression activity was slightly below average, with a total of 148 fires on the forest. Initial attack resources were successful, keeping persistently threatening fires small, with a high direct-attack success rate. There were several days where multiple lightning starts ignited across the area, which resulted in 168 lightning fires across the Malheur National Forest and Oregon Department of Forestry's John Day and Fossil Units of Central Oregon.

A small number of fires were successfully managed with indirect tactics and monitoring. They were in areas with significant safety hazards, such as standing dead trees from recent wildfires and extremely steep and rugged terrain.

The Bald Sisters Fire ignited on 08/01/2014 and consumed about 3000 acres before it was called controlled in October. The South Fork Complex was managed by the Prineville District BLM. This fire burned onto the Malheur and consumed approximately 27,000 acres of Malheur National Forest lands. Both the Bald Sisters fire and the South Fork Complex were long duration fires using a combination of suppression strategies through their lifespan.

Todd Gregory was selected for the Deputy Fire Staff position at the Supervisor's Office and Brandon Culley took the helm as Blue Mountain Ranger District Fire Management Officer. Long time Malheur National Forest employee and Assistant Center Manager at JDIDC, Elwood Stout retired after 40 years of service.



### Fire Management Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

All but one fire was successfully suppressed during initial attack. That equates to a 99.99% initial attack success rate. The majority of fires on the Malheur were contained at less than 0.1 acres. Also of note, 13% of the fires were human caused, up slightly from 2013.

#### CY14 Wildfire Statistics for the Malheur NF

	Fires	Acres
<b>Grand Total # Fires &amp; Acres:</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>30,873</b>
Human-Caused # Fires & Acres:	20	12
Lightning-Caused # Fires & Acres:	128	30,861
BM Total # Fires & Acres:	75	27567
EC Total # Fires & Acres:	46	325
PC Total # Fires & Acres:	27	298



### **CY14 John Day Interagency Dispatch Center Statistics**

	Fires	Acres
<b>Grand Total # Fires &amp; Acres:</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>46,480</b>
Human-Caused # Fires & Acres:	31	2767
Lightning-Caused # Fires & Acres:	168	43,713
Non-Wildland Fire Incidents:	345	
Off Unit Orders Processed:	1283	
Within Unit Orders Processed:	4337	
Supply Orders Processed:	4054	

### **John Day Airbase**

#### **Aviation Management Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014**

In 2014 the John Day Airbase celebrated their 41<sup>st</sup> year as an organized aviation program.

The Pacific Northwest had an epic fire season in 2014. Our aircraft and personnel stayed within region for the most part, with the exception being R-4 for an initial attack request. Collectively, the exclusive-use FS aircraft assigned to John Day flew 524.1 hours without incident.

The John Day Airbase may have set records for the amount of interagency aircraft (ODF/FS) assigned to initial attack and large fires on FS and ODF ground. The majority of those aircraft operated out of our airbase. From April's Veteran Rappel Academy through our last initial attack on October 10<sup>th</sup> aircraft were stationed at the airbase. At the height of the season our program provided management and oversight for 18 fire aircraft (10 helicopters, 4 SEATs, 3 Air Attack platforms, 1 ODF Fixed-Wing). The professionalism, skill-set, and dedication of the personnel assigned to each function were contributing factors to our successes and continued zero incident safety record.

Flight time was evenly dispersed on and off the host unit. Water/retardant application, external/internal cargo delivery, initial attack and reconnaissance missions were successfully completed.

Our Single Engine Air-Tanker program set a new record. 11 different SEATS were utilized, flew 365 sorties, and dropped 252,714 gallons of retardant.

The Malheur Rappel Crew accomplished their training goals in 2014. Personnel were assigned to a wide range of incidents in various fuel types throughout the region. Members of the program completed 14 task books in 2014 and numerous entries in other task-books.

As in years past, the FS and ODF worked together to accomplish our aviation mission. We successfully met our interagency goals and expectations by blending our safety/operational briefings, training sessions, and utilization of aircraft. Additionally, the ODF had their first helitack program in John Day in 2014.

We also found room for improvement such as, rappel operations on emerging incidents (right time, right place, right resource), effective utilization of our type III helitack aircraft, and interaction with the public at our airbase (information sharing, airbase tours, engaging with our public information officer).

### Total Flight Time Data for our exclusive-use aircraft.

Total flight time	524.1	Total pounds of cargo delivered	38,032
Federal flight time	469.5	Initial attacks	41
Non-federal flight time	27.8	Extended attacks	21
Non-Fire flight time	15.8	Gallons of Water Delivered	1,342,126
Training flight time	11	Aerial ignition flight time	0
T-874 total flight time	118.6	T-874 Gallons of Retardant Delivered	97,837
T-882 total flight time	79.7	T-882 Gallons of Retardant Delivered	71,588
T-828 total flight time	18.6	T-828 Gallons of Retardant Delivered	14,411
Total Seat flight time	216.9	Total Retardant Delivered (11 SEATs)	252,714



### Partnerships Involved

The Malheur National Forest continued to build and strengthen cooperator relationships and partnerships. MNF worked closely with Oregon Department of Forestry, neighboring national forests. The BLM, ODF and MNF continue to operate out of the interagency dispatch center located in John Day. Numerous Mutual Aid Agreements exist between the MNF, ODF, BLM, and local and county emergency agencies. Future efforts will continue to improve these partnerships to ensure professional, safe, and mutual response during emergency situations.

### Contacts

Roy Walker 541-575-3103  
Dana Skelly 541-575-3105

# Planning, Appeals, Litigation, FOIA

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## Accomplishment Summary

During Fiscal Year 2014 the forest completed 18 documented NEPA decisions (two Records of Decision, three Decision Notices, and 13 Decision Memos). In preparation for increased vegetation management projects, Blue Mountain Ranger District filled two vacant NEPA positions, and one Writer Editor position. Also added were two NEPA specialists on the Forest Plan Revision Team. To continue to increase the overall knowledge base on NEPA and Forest Policy, we provided and attended various NEPA trainings and included partners. Litigation workload has decreased by 50% but we continue to coordinate with attorneys on three litigation cases; one remains pending. FOIA workload has greatly increased in the past year.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Blue Mountain Ranger District worked on planning for four vegetation management projects, and processed approximately 25 Categorical Exclusion checklists for special uses
- Processed 26 FOIA requests
- BMRD processed one NEPA appeal (Galena)
- Reached settlement or completion on two litigation cases
- Provided NEPA trainings for the Forest/Burns Paiute Tribes: Intro to NEPA, NEPA for Line Officers, and Cumulative Effects
- Continued with Forest Plan Revision
- Continued with Invasive Plants NEPA
- Provided Forest wide FOIA direction
- FOIA Training for District Contacts and Forest Leadership Team
- Wild and Scenic River Monitoring Report (draft)

## Key Projects in Progress

- NEPA Quality Control Plan
- NEPA Efficiency Plan
- Additional NEPA Training
- Monthly NEPA program meetings and NEPA Café training
- Forest Plan Revision
- Invasive Plants EIS

## Contacts

Janet Plocharsky	541-575-3390
Gerald Dixon	541-575-3018

## Administration/Budget

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### Accomplishment Summary

The forest administrative group provides quality office services and assistance to forest employees. In Fiscal Year 2014, we continued with funding for Accelerated Restoration and the arrival and/or departure of many employees.

### Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Cost Pool 1 covered all salaries, travel, training, Transfer of Station and supplies for Forest Line Officers (Forest Supervisor, Deputy Forest Supervisor, and District Rangers), Union representation, Civil Rights Coordinator, Safety Officer and Forest Supervisor's Administrative Assistant
- Cost Pool 2 provided funds for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) coordination
- Cost Pool 3 provided funds for Public Communications which includes the Forest Public Affairs Staff Officer and Public Affairs Specialist
- Cost Pool 4 provided funds for Support Services on the districts and at the Supervisor's Office
- Cost Pool 5 provided funding for all leases, rents, utilities, contracts, and general office supplies

### Contact:

Judy Morgan 541-575-3310  
Patricia Ross 541-575-3342

# Public Affairs

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## Accomplishment Summary

The Malheur National Forest serves the public by meeting a diverse set of expectations. An effective Public Affairs program assures professional and quality external and internal communications. The Public Affairs Team contributed to the positive image of the Forest. The team is also a resource for the Forest Leadership Team, Line Officers and Program Staff. It serves to aid implementation of all Forest programs, as well as adding value to Forest management efforts in all program areas.

## Specific Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014 include:

- Briefing and Contacts Center – online reference center for key documents
- Community Relations and Events – guidance, coordination and support for Forest events and community projects
- Conservation Education – advice, coordination and support for Forest conservation education events
- External Communications – media requests, forest website administration, news coverage, briefing papers, key messages, news releases, press packets, fact sheets, news tips, market stories, “In Brief”, Accomplishment Report, and Forest-wide Program of Work publications to elected officials and key stakeholder
- Fire Communications – central source of fire information for employees, media and public, alert to sensitive political, social, tribal, and environmentally related incidents and kept the Forest, Incident Commander and other appropriate managers apprised of issues
- Interagency Coordination – established, nurtured and maintained effective working relationships with Public Affairs personnel at other agencies and organizations
- Front liner Engagement – forest-wide, our front liners provided excellent customer service not only to our internal employees by providing other departments with needed support and assisting in forest web management, but also to our external publics through sales of firewood permits, maps, post and pole permits, Christmas tree permits, mushroom permits, and providing the public with knowledgeable information on our forest and surround areas of interest
- Internal Communications – assured employees were abreast of major issues, programs and events; developed messages for the Forest Supervisor on key issues; produced monthly “Malheur Minute”, as well as quarterly forest newsletter, the “Tempo”
- Legislative Affairs – informed elected officials at local, state and federal levels of Forest issues/programs; helped ensure a positive attitude towards the Forest, maintained collaborative relationships with keys contacts; created briefing papers on key issues and consistent Forest messages
- Public Information – oversight of Forest publications (brochures, flyers, newsletters, etc.) and exhibits to ensure Forest standards were met, messages consistent, etc
- Public Involvement – researched and analyzed public opinion; prepared public involvement strategies that identified potential affected interests, issues, key messages, communication tools and monitoring techniques; examined effectiveness of public involvement

- Strategic Communication – tracked Forest issues and public opinion, worked with Forest personnel to develop internal/external communication strategies on major issues and provided training, consultation and advice on presentations and meetings

## **Key Projects Completed or Participated in**

- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act
- National Wildlife Week
- Home and Garden Show
- Earth Day
- Outdoor School
- Family Fun Day
- Grant County 62' Days
- Cinnabar Mountain Rendezvous
- Grant County Fair
- National Get Outdoors Day
- Free Fishing Day
- National Trails Day
- Grant County Fair
- Harney County Fair
- Hunting Season Preparation
- National Public Lands Day
- Festival of Trees
- Timber Truckers Parade
- Grade Schools decorate Supervisor's Office Christmas tree
- Bald Sisters Fire
- South Fork Complex

## **Contacts**

Teresa Gallagher	541-575-3144
Shilo Burton	541-575-3008



**Region 6**  
**Malheur National Forest Contacts**

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/malheur/>

**Supervisor's Office**

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John Day, OR 97845  
(541) 575-3000

**Blue Mountain Ranger District**

431 Patterson Bridge Road  
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John Day, OR 97845  
(541) 575-3000

**Emigrant Creek Ranger District**

265 Highway 20 South  
Hines, OR 97738  
(541) 573-4300

**Prairie City Ranger District**

327 Southwest Front Street  
P.O. Box 337  
Prairie City, OR 97869  
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